

# CLUB MARK STATUS FOR CROQUET

Accreditation with Croquet England tells everyone that your club is well-run, safe and welcoming and that it provides opportunities for everyone to participate



There are many successful croquet clubs, some small and some large, but what makes a good club great? How do prospective members know the club is well-run, that they will be welcomed and safe and that they will be able to reach whatever level of play suits them?

Croquet England's Club Mark scheme is designed to help all clubs show that they have reached a standard recognised by Croquet England and their own club members.

**Why bother though?**

Most clubs want to attract and retain members, many would like to have more young people or families, some would like sponsorship or funding to secure their future or achieve their goals. Club Mark will give the wider local community, parents, new recruits and potential sponsors or funders the confidence that they would like to be associated with your club.

To help get your club get started, we recommend that you use Sport England's [Club Health Check Tool](#). This will show you what your club is already doing well and where there is room for improvement. Links are provided from this to lots of advice in [Sport England's Buddle](#) (formerly known as Club Matters) that will help guide you towards these accreditation requirements. We have also produced a guidance document with links to useful information for each section.

All clubs are different and it is appreciated that some clubs have fewer resources to meet challenging governance and development changes. There are therefore two levels of Croquet England's Club Mark accreditation: The Silver Standard and The Gold Standard.

The Silver Standard may be more suited to smaller clubs or for using as a stepping stone to the Gold Standard. However, any club, regardless of its size, can choose to meet the Gold Standard. If the club is seeking funding, particularly from Sport England, then this should be considered. For clubs that opt for the Silver Standard they can ask to be assessed for the Gold Standard at any time after 12 months has elapsed or when their accreditation is renewed. All accreditation lasts for 3 years.

The design of this accreditation is based on the former Sport England Club Mark scheme, that ceased in 2019, and [Sport England's Code for Sports Governance - Tier 1](#) which is the level recommended by Sport England for clubs (identified as *Tier1 requirement* below)

Once a club is accredited it will be able to display the Croquet England Club Mark logo on its website, social media and stationery. A certificate will be issued for display in the clubhouse.

## Section 1: Club Structure and Management

Clubs that are well managed tend to be more successful and sustainable for the future as well as being better prepared in the event of unexpected events or emergencies. Good leaders have vision and the future of the whole club at heart so they will make sound long-term decisions.

Club Structure and Management	Evidence requirements for The Silver Standard	Additional evidence for The Gold Standard
1.1 The Club is affiliated to the National Governing Body and its members are registered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affiliation to Croquet England</li> <li>Club members are registered as standard associates of Croquet England</li> </ul>	
1.2 The Club has governing documents in place and demonstrates how it is managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club has appropriate governance documents, such as a constitution, that clearly state the purpose of the club, demonstrates how decisions are made and how it operates. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> <li>The Club can show that it has an inclusive and open approach to membership. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> <li>The Club is governed by a committee that meets regularly and decision making is recorded (minutes) and approved. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club can demonstrate that the committee has the skills and diversity needed to operate effectively. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> <li>Elected committee members are subject to regular election, every 3 or 4 years, and ideally should serve no more than 9 years in succession. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> </ul>
1.3 All those involved in the management of the Club understand their roles and responsibilities and what is expected of them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club can show that at least three of the people on the committee are unrelated and not co-habiting. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club has codes of conduct and outlines of roles for all those involved in the management of the Club.</li> <li>Conflicts of interest are recognised and managed effectively e.g. if there is a conflict of interest, the chair will require the relevant committee member/s to be excluded from decision making. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> </ul>
1.4 The Club has specific membership categories and pricing policies as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club can show different classifications of membership categories and its pricing policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Categories of membership include juniors and/or families.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision is made for payment of subscription by instalments for those who find a single annual payment difficult.</li> </ul>
1.5 Financial procedures and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budgeting, monitoring finances and financial planning is overseen by the Club's committee. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> <li>The Club can demonstrate that financial decision making and processing transactions is not managed by one person acting alone. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club can show that annual accounts are prepared and reviewed independently by someone other than the person who has prepared them, and that the final annual accounts are made available to members. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> </ul>
1.6 Risk management, club resilience and management of liabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of risks to the club's future and its sustainability. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> <li>Evidence that the club's resilience is considered when setting subscription rates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigation and control measures for those risks. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> <li>Management of potential liabilities, particularly for unincorporated clubs. <i>(Tier 1 requirement)</i></li> <li>Consideration is given to the ratio of financial reserves to annual running costs.</li> </ul>
1.7 The Club's premises, activities, and coaches are insured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Displaying, or providing to members, certificates of insurance, including the Croquet England Club Insurance Certificate</li> <li>Copies of insurance of premises (if applicable) and property. (These are not covered by the Croquet England Club Insurance Policy)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence that coaches are qualified and therefore have professional indemnity insurance under the Croquet England Club Insurance Policy. Separate insurance is advised for unqualified coaches if they are not under the direct supervision of an insured coach.</li> </ul>

## Section 2: Duty of Care and Welfare

Members, volunteers, and visitors all want to enjoy their croquet, and other activities, at the Club in a safe environment. The requirements in this section will help Clubs to take the steps needed to ensure that.

Duty of Care and Welfare	Evidence requirements for The Silver Standard	Additional evidence for The Gold Standard
2.1 The Club ensures that all activities take place in a safe environment that complies with legal requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance for safe play</li> <li>• Examples of actions taken to ensure members are safe.</li> <li>• First Aid kit</li> <li>• Fire extinguishers or other fire prevention (if applicable)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health &amp; Safety policy or equivalent</li> <li>• Completed risk assessment forms.</li> <li>• Sample accident or incident report form.</li> <li>• Records of staff / volunteers trained in first aid.</li> <li>• Hygiene certificate for food preparation areas (if applicable)</li> </ul>
2.2 The Club has necessary provision in place for the safeguarding and welfare of its members (Child & Adults Safeguarding Policies that meet statutory requirements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welfare and/or safeguarding policy and reporting procedures linked to Croquet England’s policies.</li> <li>• All members, including young people and parents / carers are made aware of these policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Lead coaches and volunteers working in regulated activity are subject to a DBS check at enhanced level including a barred list check; and other individuals in DBS eligible roles undertake an enhanced level DBS check (without a barred list check).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of welfare and safeguarding procedures for recruitment, induction and deployment of volunteers (and workforce if applicable).</li> <li>• Evidence of how the Club collects and safely stores all members’ registration details – to include information on contact details, disability, medical conditions, parental consent(s) and emergency contact information for under 18s.</li> <li>• The Club can show how it follows Croquet England guidance regarding photography and video, social media and events.</li> </ul>
2.3 Club Welfare (safeguarding) Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The club has appointed a Club Welfare/Safeguarding officer/s with a clearly defined role. It has informed Croquet England and ensured Croquet England has up to date contact details.</li> <li>• The Club Welfare/Safeguarding Officer has completed the child and adult safeguarding training courses, required by Croquet England, within the last 3 years.</li> </ul>	

<p>2.4 There are clear systems to report, respond to and manage safeguarding concerns or allegations of poor practice or behaviour that arise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Club knows how to recognise, respond to, record and report safeguarding concerns raised within the Club.</li> <li>• Where poor behaviour or poor practice is identified the club has a mechanism to deal with it, in the first instance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Club should have a written complaints and disciplinary policy to address breaches of codes of conduct or the safeguarding policies – this should be communicated to all members, parents / carers, coaches, volunteers and instructors.</li> </ul>
<p>2.5 Coaches, volunteers and Club Welfare Officers receive an induction which includes information about safeguarding responsibilities, policies and procedures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contact details of the Club Welfare/Safeguarding Officer are clearly displayed at the club (if it has permanent facilities) and are readily available to all members via its website, newsletter or other communication methods.</li> <li>• Evidence of communication of safeguarding information to all coaches, volunteers and other members and the parents / carers of U18s and ‘at risk’ adults.</li> <li>• All club members have an awareness of the safeguarding policies and how to raise any concerns they may have.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records of details of Welfare Officer(s) and coaches’ safeguarding training records and DBS checks available through the Club (or through Croquet England).</li> <li>• All lead coaches have received safeguarding training.</li> </ul>

## Section 3: Playing Facilities and Coaching Programme

What playing facilities and opportunities is your Club providing, when are you providing them, how are you delivering them and by whom?

Most people have many competing claims on their time. They want opportunities that are fun, sociable, convenient and competitive. They want to be able to progress in the sport to whatever is their desired level of achievement. Croquet competes with other leisure and family commitments and so the playing timetable and coaching programme need to be flexible if people are to keep coming back.

Playing Facilities and Coaching Programme	Evidence requirements for The Silver Standard	Additional evidence for The Gold Standard
3.1 Playing facilities and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or more croquet courts of at least half-size, with short, mown grass that is reasonably flat and maintained to a standard to ensure safe play.</li> <li>• Hoops and balls should be approved by Croquet England for club play.</li> <li>• Club mallets should be available for beginners and visitors.</li> </ul>	<p><i>These requirements in 3.1 are instead of, rather than in addition to, the Silver Standard requirements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least one full sized croquet court, maintained to a standard to ensure safe and appropriate competitive play conditions.</li> <li>• Facilities for playing short croquet (i.e. splitting a full court in half or a separate court).</li> <li>• Hoops and balls should be approved by Croquet England for competitive play.</li> <li>• Sufficient club mallets should be available for all participants on learn-to-play courses to have one each and for new players to have the use of until they buy their own mallet.</li> </ul>
3.2 The Club provides a suitable coaching and playing programme(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Club coaching and playing programmes provide opportunities for players of all levels of ability.</li> <li>• The club participates in team events in local, Federation or National leagues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing and coaching programmes for AC, short croquet and GC</li> <li>• Players are encouraged to play in competitions for individuals at local, Federation or National tournaments.</li> </ul>

<p>3.3 Where appropriate, and in partnership with Croquet England, the Club offers development pathways for all talented players</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Club can show how it recognises and provides support to individuals who show potential or who want to develop.</li> <li>• The club has a Level 1 Player pathway facilitator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Example(s) or evidence of a development pathway with coaching for different levels of ability.</li> <li>• Evidence of communication with parent(s) / carers where appropriate</li> </ul>
<p>3.4 The playing/coaching programme is regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the needs of members and delivery is of a high quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of engaging with members to review their satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions taken to ensure and maintain high quality delivery.</li> </ul>
<p>3.5 The Club actively welcomes and encourages new members and delivers sessions appropriate to their ability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of sessions for new members and delivery of sessions appropriate for beginners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sessions to meet the varying abilities of all beginners and those in the early stages of their playing career.</li> <li>• Availability of sessions to meet working people's time limitations e.g evening or weekend coaching, Pay to Play.</li> </ul>
<p>3.6 The Club ensures all coaches are appropriately qualified and meet minimum standards as set by Croquet England.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of encouragement for active coaches to become qualified coaches or engagement with other clubs/academies to provide shared coaching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records maintained of all coaches and their relevant qualifications.</li> </ul>
<p>3.7 Coaches, volunteers, Club Welfare Officers and all those involved in delivery of suitable activity / playing programme understand their roles, responsibilities and expected standards of behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People in the various roles can explain their roles, responsibilities and expected standards of behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code(s) of conduct and role outlines are given to coaches, Club Welfare Officers and other volunteers with specific roles. Demonstrate how this is implemented at induction and reviewed within the Club</li> </ul>



<p>3.8 Those involved in the delivery of the playing programme are provided with support and participate in training and development</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of training and development for coaches such as progression in Level of coaching qualifications, membership of UK Coaching, courses undertaken etc.</li> </ul>
<p>3.9 Assignment of handicaps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A club handicapper is appointed to assign handicaps to all members who have been with the club for 12 months or more, or arrangements made with the Federation handicapper to do this.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Club handicappers capable of assessing GC and AC handicaps are appointed.</li> </ul>
<p>3.10 The Club has a vision for its development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club can show it has a discussed, within its committee and with its members, ways to develop and improve the club and it has some actions planned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 3 to 5-year development and/or improvement plan has been developed in consultation with the members.</li> <li>The resources needed to achieve the plan have been identified.</li> <li>Action points are assigned to individuals or small groups and overseen by the general committee.</li> <li>An update on progress of the development and/or improvement plan is provided to members annually.</li> </ul>

## Section 4: Knowing your Club and Community

Having a friendly, welcoming and sociable club is one of the most important factors in being a club member. This is crucial in retaining members as well as making new members feel welcome. Your club also needs to be known in your area. Word of mouth and personal recommendation are the most frequent ways new members find out about croquet.

This is also about recognition of all the people who make playing croquet possible, particularly all those volunteers who help the club run, and keeping your existing members happy.

Knowing your Club and Community	Evidence requirements for The Silver Standard	Additional evidence for The Gold Standard
4.1 The Club engages with and demonstrates an awareness and appreciation of who its current members, volunteers, coaches, and club officers are.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club recognises and regularly thanks the contribution of coaches, volunteers, instructors, club officers and Club Welfare Officer(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club actively engages in succession planning through constant effort to recruit new coaches, volunteers and committee members.</li> </ul>
4.2 The Club creates an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club has information specifically for new members as part of induction; this can be in a range of formats.</li> <li>The Club welcomes and encourages new members from all sectors of the community and uses appropriate methods of communication to engage different sectors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club has an inclusion and diversity and/or equity policy.</li> <li>Coaches, volunteers, club officers and Club Welfare Officers are made aware of the inclusion policy of the Club.</li> <li>The Club creates opportunities to actively engage specific groups in coaching, volunteering, committee, and other roles.</li> <li>The Club can show how it provides an inclusive programme for specific groups e.g. introductory sessions for targeted groups - women's session, youth, disabled participants etc.</li> </ul>
4.3 The Club proactively encourages new members and manages the process for waiting lists where this applies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club assigns an appointed person for new member enquiries.</li> <li>The Club has due process in place for waiting lists (if operating at full capacity) and communicates these as required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence that the Club has an agreed approach to increase participation from specific groups / audiences e.g. ethnic minorities, disabled participants, and young people.</li> </ul>

<p>4.4 The Club actively engages with its members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Club can show ongoing communications with members e.g. newsletters, website, social media etc. (Tier 1 requirement)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Club consults with members to ensure it meets their needs e.g. quality of facility, coaching, subscriptions.</li> <li>• Evidence that the Club acts on feedback following consultation with members.</li> </ul>
<p>4.5 Retention of members is essential for the long-term survival of the club</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The club examines the retention figures of new members into their 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year and discusses ways to improve retention.</li> <li>• Club can demonstrate activities aimed at retention of members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that the Club actively follows up with non-active members and lapsed members to re-engage.</li> <li>• Feedback from new members, near the end of their first season, is acquired.</li> <li>• Feedback from members who have left is sought.</li> <li>• An action programme to improve retention, based on the above feedback, is developed and regularly reviewed in the light of updated retention figures.</li> </ul>
<p>4.6 Engagement with the wider community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of using the press, social media, posters or other methods to let the wider community know where your club is and what it does.</li> <li>• Holding Open Days that are widely advertised in the local community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of appropriate sessions developed to engage different sections of the local community e.g. schools, local employers, youth organisations and community groups.</li> </ul>